

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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P 130200Z DEC 74

FM AMCONSUL FUKUOKA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO JA

INFO SECSTATE 423

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FUKUOKA 282

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJ: LOCAL REACTION TO NEW PRIME MINISTER

SUMMARY: LOCAL REACTION TO MIKI'S ACCESSION TO PRIME MINISTER HAS BEEN ALMOST UNIFORMLY FAVORABLE AMONG CONSERVATIVES. MOST LOCAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LEADERS ADMIT THEY WERE SURPRISED BY EVENT, BUT SAY THAT, IN RETROSPECT, MIKI MUCH BETTER CHOICE THAN EITHER OHIRA OR FUKUDA. END SUMMARY.

BASED ON LOCAL NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH POLITICIANS AND BUSINESSMEN, APPEARS CHOICE OF MIKI AS PRIME MINISTER DID EXACTLY WHAT MOST PEOPLE ASSUME IT WAS MEANT TO DO, I.E., LET LDP FACE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND LOSS OF TRUST WITHOUT BLOODY INTER-

PAGE TWO RUADLTA9611 C O N F I D E N T I A L

NECINE BATTLE. LOCAL INDUSTRIALIST SUMMED IT UP WHEN HE TOLD US DECEMBER 12. "NO ONE THOUGHT MIKI HAD ANY CHANCE, BUT WHEN WE SAW HE WOULD BECOME PRIME MINISTER, WE REALIZED WHAT A GOOD CHOICE IT HAD BEEN."

NEW CABINET ALSO SEEN AS STRONGER THAN OLD. SHOZO KIYOSHIMA, PRESIDENT OF NAGASAKI'S 18TH BANK, SAID APPOINTMENT OF MIYAZAWA AND FUKUDA PARTICULARLY GOOD, AND INDICATED MIKI WOULD PLACE PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CURBING INFLATION. CABINET ALSO SEEN AS SKILLFUL BALANCING OF FACTIONS.

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FACTIONAL RIVALRY AND LDP'S RELIANCE OF MONEY PERCEIVED AS

POSSIBLE CAUSE FOR FURTHER DECLINE OF CONSERVATIVE STRENGTH.
GOJIRO ARIKAWA, PRESIDENT OF FUKUOKA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND
SABURO NAGAKURA, PRESIDENT OF KYUSHU ELECTRIC COMPANY, BOTH
SAID IF MIKI FAILS TO MEND FACTIONAL BICKERING, AVERAGE PERSON'S
TRUST IN LDP, ALREADY LOW, WOULD BE HURT EVEN MORE. NEW ECONOMIC
POLICY ALSO BEING ANXIOUSLY AWAITED.
COMMENT: ALTHOUGH TOO EARLY TO TELL, MOST CONSERVATIVES THINK
CHANCE OF LDP CANDIDATES IN UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN
MEASURABLY HELPED. FOR PRESENT, AT LEAST, LDP SEEMS TO HAVE
PAPERED OVER FACTIONAL INFIGHTING THAT CHARACTERIZED PERIOD

PAGE THREE RUADLTA9611 C O N F I D E N T I A L
PRECEDING TANAKA'S RESIGNATION. MOST POLITICALLY-AWARE
JAPANESE IN KYUSHU THINK CHANCES FOR FAIRLY EARLY DISSOLUTION
OF LOWER HOUSE GOOD, AND BELIEVE MIKI MUCH BETTER ABLE
TO LEAD PARTY INTO FRAY THAN EITHER OHIRA OR FUKUDA.
RICHARDSON

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